

Draft Minutes
Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group

June 13, 2005

Weaverville Victorian Inn, 1709 Main Street, Weaverville, CA

The meeting was open to the public.

1:15 P.M. convene

Members in attendance:

Member:

Arnold Whitridge (Chairman)

Ed Duggan

David Steinhauser

Dana Hord

Dan Haycox

James Feider

Richard Lorenz

Serge Birk

Patrick Frost

James Spear

Byron Leydecker

Representative Seat:

Safe Alternatives for Forest Environment

Willow Creek Community Service Department

Six Rivers Outfitter and Guide Association

Big Bar Community Development Group

Miners Alliance

City of Redding Electric Utility Department

Trinity County Resident

Central Valley Project Water Association

Trinity County Resource Conservation District

Natural Resources Conservation Service

California Trout, Inc.

Thomas Weseloh replaced Byron Leydecker as an alternate during the last portion of the meeting.

Designated Federal Official: Mike Long Fish and Wildlife Service, Arcata, CA (substituting for Steve Thompson).

Members not in attendance:

Zeke Grader, Pacific Coast Federation of Fisherman's Associations; Elizabeth Soderstrom, Natural Heritage Institute; Tim Colvin, Trinity Lake Owners Association.

1. Welcome and Introduction; Adopt Agenda; Approve Minutes of April meeting

Arnold Whitridge opened the meeting and the members introduced themselves. Mike Long reported on status of new members and said that no new progress has been made by the Department of Interior in processing the new appointments. Whitridge asked the members for interest in length of the meeting and most indicated an interest in completing the meeting in one day. There were no additions to the agenda.

Edits to the minutes. No changes were suggested for the April 2005 minutes.

Richard Lorenz made a motion to accept the minutes as amended.

Dan Haycox seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

2. Open Forum; Public Comment

Tom Weseloh, commenting as member of the public, expressed dismay about the lack of progress on appointment of the new members to the TAMWG. He noted that nine-months has passed. He asked that TAMWG write a letter to Trinity Management Council (TMC) asking them to write a letter to the Secretary of the Interior to expedite appointments.

Byron Leydecker made a motion to send letters to both the Secretary of the Interior and the Trinity Management Council (TMC) to expedite appointments to the TAMWG.

Seconded by Richard Lorenz.

Motion passed unanimously.

3. Budget Process, Budget Priorities, 2006 Budget

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to the 2006 budget of the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP). The TAMWG needed to approve, reject, or ask for modifications to the budget and make it's recommendation to the TMC for it's respective decision on the budget.

The presentations of the budget was divided into three areas: 1) Rehabilitation and Implementation (RIG) presented by Ed Solbos; 2) Technical Modeling and Analysis (TMAG) presented by Rod Wittler; and 3) Program Administration presented by Douglas Schleusner.

Before the budget was discussed, Schleusner gave a brief presentation on the goals and directions of the Trinity River Restoration Program. This presentation emphasized some new concepts and strategic thinking that was developed in response to reviews and inputs he had recently received by review committees (B-team and others).

Doug Schleusner, Executive Director of the TRRP made a presentation entitled “Developing a Mission-Critical program of work for FY 2006.” Three handouts were passed out at this time. First was the 2006 budget (**Attachment 1**). The second handout was a set of summary sheets that described the various projects referred to in the budget (**Attachment 2**). The third handout was a one-page sheet showing a management process that the TRRP is following (**Attachment 3**). Schleusner reiterated the goals of the program as stated in the Record of Decision and some of the near-term tasks. He noted that their budget was derived by having program goals drive the budget and “not the other way around.”

Schleusner also noted that he had prepared a revised budget and that this is the 6/13/05 budget in Attachment 1. He stressed to the TAMWG the need to have an approved budget by June 22 (the date of the next TMC meeting). Schleusner reiterated the goals of the program—to restore fish population to pre-dam levels, by releasing more water, through floodplain improvements, by unhandcuffing the river channel through manipulation projects, and managing/manipulating coarse sediment and reducing fine sediment inputs. He also reiterated the concept of monitoring to help and improve their planning and management.

Byron Leydecker noted that this budget seems to move in that direction and he commended Schleusner on the presentation.

Rehabilitation and Implementation (RIG) Budget for 2006

Ed Solbos leader of the Rehabilitation and Implementation Group (RIG) of the TRRP explained various cost projections relating to restoration and construction as shown in Attachment 1.

The RIG budget for 2006 was \$5.2 million versus the “full program budget” of \$7.8 million. One way Solbos was able to save expenses this year was to push costs into future years.

Solbos reported that they have realized that there are more houses and structures in the floodplain that will be affected by the increased dam releases than the Record of Decision had predicted. He thinks there could be as many as 500 parcels that may need consideration. This may require moving the structures, purchases, or other mitigations. He projected floodplain structure relocation costs at \$1.5 million in FY2006. These costs will continue for the next several years. Solbos also pointed out another complexity about whether to provide mitigation dollars for a particular structure depends on whether one considers a 10-year flood event or from a 100-year flood event. If the tributaries happen to have a 100-year flood event in the spring of a wet year when the releases from the dam are supposed to be 11,000 cubic feet per second, the flooding to structures would be much greater and mitigation is costlier.

Solbos said the Program is attempting to hold their administration costs to no more than 20 % of the total budget. Currently the RIG costs are larger than the Technical Modeling and Analysis Group (TMAG), but that these proportions will gradually shift over the coming years as TMAG grows and RIG shrinks.

Solbos went over how the line items the budget of Attachment 1 were linked to the details of Attachment 2. He showed that project 18 was located on page 18.

Serge Birk asked if more information could be put into description of “critical program goals.” For example on page 19, the program goal simply stated “Channel Rehabilitation.” Solbos agreed that perhaps they could continue to add such detail. Bryon Leydecker suggested that specific detail such as “quantifying the increases in new juvenile rearing habitat” would be more useful.

Solbos noted that the true construction costs can far exceed the 6/13/05 or “President’s budgeted levels.” They plan to cover the difference in actual costs over this year’s budgeted costs by allocating costs to future years. Solbos could not predict actual construction budgets. But he noted that any costs deferred to the next year would begin to take dollars from other future projects.

James Feider asked what could be done to help with these budget shortfalls. Schleusner noted that such a “full budget” would not be borne entirely by the Bureau of Reclamation but that other sources of funds will be needed. .

Serge Birk commented that programs never get the entire budgets and that this program should not count on extra money. He recommended that they prioritize and think strategically and that the TAMWG not make the cuts but give the guidance of what is important. Whitridge pointed out that the budget does that. Feider noted that instead of funding everything piecemeal, important tasks should get more funding--such as the work in the river. Leydecker countered that perhaps floodplain restoration is more important as failing to do this would jeopardize the flows from the dam.

Technical Modeling and Analysis Group (TMAG) Budget for 2006

Rod Wittler leader of the Technical Modeling and Analysis Group (TMAG) next described his portion of the budget in Attachment 1.

Wittler’s main point was that the TMAG budget was \$3.6 million versus the \$5.3 million in the “full budget.” He noted that most of his costs were to “buy data” or pay organizations to collect the data he needs to perform his mission. He made necessary cuts, but this level of funding was the minimum needed to still accomplish the needs of his program. He had cut the stream gaging stations from 15 down to 12 and reduced smolt trapping down to 6 months. He still required some consulting funds to provide backup for his in-house work. He was seeking outside sources of funding for some of his projects.

There were questions about payments for Tribal Harvest Survey for \$130,000 for this year when this data is readily available without the need for additional surveys. It was noted that this money going into a “general effort” and that the data were important. The data is being delivered in a better manner and the scopes of work are more restrictive.

Program Administration Budget for 2006

Douglas Schleusner next described the Program Administration portions of the budget.

The main point was that Administration costs \$1.9 million versus \$2.3 million in the “full budget.” The administration costs were less than 20 % of the total budget.

One issue of discussion was the seemingly high costs for the TMC participants (\$700,000). It was noted that the majority (\$500,000) was given to the two tribes whereas some participants asked for no support. Schleusner noted that they have provided justification for their portions and that some administrations account the costs differently. He also noted that the TMC handles how they budget their costs as it carries some sensitivity.

Leydecker suggested that the difference between the \$12,000 for the TAMWG and the \$700,000 for the TMC should be explored more fully at the time that the new TAMWG members come in.

There was discussion about whether there should be a cap on the program administration costs. One suggestion was to keep administration costs to 20 %, but no decisions were made.

Byron Leydecker made a motion that the TAMWG recommend that the Trinity Management Council (TMC) adopt the budget as presented, and that the TMC do so before they adjourn their next meeting on June 22.

Seconded by Dana Hord.

Passed with one abstain

Abstain by Jim Feider. He cited his concern that the extra \$4 million needed for floodplain structure mitigation was a surprise. He was concerned that the funding plan may take away money from the river rehabilitation work. Feider believes it would be better to push funding for floodplain mitigation into the “out years,” which would still allow for 11,000 cfs releases from the dam, except during the storm events greater than a 1 in 10 year frequency.

Tom Weseloh made a motion that the TAMWG make a recommendation to the TMC to seek adequate funding commensurate with the 2007 and 2008 program needs (Full ROD Program).

Seconded by Richard Lorenz.

Motion passed unanimously.

Tom Weseloh made a motion that the TAMWG make a recommendation to the TMC to seek a one-time appropriation to meet the \$5 million estimated floodplain mitigation costs.

Feider seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

There was general agreement that the concept of spending allocations between the RIG and TMAG were appropriate and the gradual shift to more TMAG in later years is good.

There was also general agreement that the budget process and presentation was much improved this year. Whitridge noted he would communicate these views to the TMC.

Final discussion focused on dates for the next meeting. It was thought that there would be no meeting before September. One suggestion was to schedule the next meeting two weeks before the TMC meeting.

4. Executive Director's Report

This item was not discussed.

5. Adjourn

List of motions that were passed:

Byron Leydecker made a motion to send letters to both the Secretary of the Interior and the Trinity Management Council (TMC) to expedite appointments to the TAMWG.

Seconded by Richard Lorenz.

Motion passed unanimously.

Byron Leydecker made a motion that the TAMWG recommend the TMC to adopt the budget as presented, and that the TMC do so before they adjourn their next meeting on June 22.

Seconded by Dana Hord.

Passed with one abstain

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Seconded by Richard Lorenz.

Motion passed unanimously.

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Feider seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

List of Attachments:

Attachment 1: FY2006 Budget and estimated out-year projections.

Attachment 2: Trinity River Restoration Program FY2006: Project Descriptions.

Attachment 3: Professional Management Process sheet.